United Nations A/60/415

General Assembly

Distr.: General
5 October 2005

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Agenda item 120
Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Letter dated 29 September 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

On 26 July 2005, the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Chile, Indonesia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Romania, South Africa and Norway signed a joint ministerial declaration on disarmament and non-proliferation. In the declaration, the Ministers expressed their disappointment at the outcome of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and called on all States to take a strong stand on disarmament and non-proliferation at last week's General Assembly Summit. A large number of countries from all regions expressed support for this initiative.

Like so many others, we sincerely regret the absence of any reference to non-proliferation and disarmament in the outcome document adopted by the 2005 World Summit and intend to continue our efforts to gather support for further action on these issues.

On behalf of Australia, Chile, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, Romania, South Africa and my own country, Norway, I kindly ask that you circulate the present letter together with the enclosed ministerial declaration (see annex) as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Johan L. **Løvald**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

05-53833 (E) 101005

Annex to the letter dated 29 September 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Ministerial declaration

1. We the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Chile, Indonesia, Norway, Romania, South Africa and the United Kingdom have agreed today on a contribution to the current debates at the United Nations in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. This is a critical time for the international community to take stock of how we respond to today's threats, and we are committed to working for a strong outcome for the 2005 World Summit in September.

2. We sincerely regret that an opportunity to strengthen international resolve on non-proliferation and disarmament was missed at the 2005 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) — especially at a time when the risks of proliferation and actual use of nuclear weapons constitute one of the most fundamental threats to our common security. The Treaty is a cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. We cannot be complacent about the challenges it confronts. At the Summit, all States must take a strong stand on non-proliferation and disarmament. We believe that failure to do so may ultimately imperil peaceful nuclear cooperation and our shared vision for a world free of nuclear weapons.

3. The NPT rests on three pillars — non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful nuclear cooperation. We have an obligation to maintain the integrity of this carefully crafted multilateral instrument, and we reaffirm our commitment to its mutually supportive rights and obligations.

4. Full compliance with all articles of the NPT by all States Parties is crucial. States Parties are at all times accountable for compliance with their Treaty obligations. We call for universalization of the Treaty. We also call on States not party to the NPT to fulfil their responsibilities to the international community in the fields of non-proliferation and disarmament.

5. The spectre of nuclear terrorism has placed a new premium on the need to strengthen the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. Finding weapons of mass destruction in the hands of terrorists is today a real and frightening prospect. Terrorists would not hesitate to threaten to use them or to use them. And we know they are trying to acquire them.

6. Current threats require the strengthening of effective measures to safeguard nuclear materials, and to control access to them. All States Members of the United Nations have a solemn obligation to put in place adequate national legislation and enforcement in both areas. We emphasize the obligation of all States to implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). We also welcome the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, seek its early ratification and encourage States not party to the Convention to accede promptly and ratify its amendment. We recognize that the only full guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons would be complete security of nuclear materials and a world free of all nuclear weapons.

7. We reaffirm the inalienable right of all States Parties to the NPT to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination but also in conformity with their non-proliferation obligations and safeguards obligations under the Treaty, and provided that peaceful nuclear activities are not diverted for weapons purposes. We recognize the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as the competent authority responsible to verify and assure compliance with safeguards agreements which States Parties undertake in fulfilment of their obligations under the Treaty. We must continue to strengthen verification to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of IAEA safeguards. This requires concrete commitments from States. We call on all States that have not yet done so to conclude and implement relevant Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols without delay; conclusion of both is essential for effective verification. These safeguards measures should facilitate robust peaceful nuclear cooperation. However, States may choose to fully enjoy the benefits of nuclear energy without developing a domestic fuel cycle capability. We should establish mechanisms to ensure guaranteed access to the market for nuclear fuel and related services for States in compliance with their non-proliferation obligations and safeguards obligations under the NPT, as determined by the IAEA. We welcome the report of the IAEA Director General's Expert Group on Multilateral Approaches to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle, and resolve to support all efforts to identify and develop a consensus solution that provides assurances of both supply of services and non-proliferation.

8. We also need firm action to discourage any potential defection from the NPT. Whilst recognizing the sovereign right of States Parties to withdraw from the NPT, we also reaffirm that a State remains liable for breaches of international obligations undertaken prior to withdrawal from a Treaty. Leaving the Treaty must not be considered a viable or consequence-free option. The obligations undertaken by NPT States Parties cannot be retrospectively forgotten; to ensure confidence in the Treaty, we must respond decisively to non-compliance.

9. We believe that general and complete disarmament is a global responsibility. We must continue practical, systematic and progressive efforts to advance nuclear disarmament globally and reduce nuclear weapons towards a world free of nuclear weapons. All States should increase transparency and security of their fissile material holdings. We must seek the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty; we also urge the soonest commencement of negotiations without preconditions on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.